

IRS TAX TIP 2003-49

FREE HELP FROM THE IRS

Sometimes you just need a little help preparing your federal tax return. The IRS offers free assistance by computer, telephone, fax, and in person. The IRS can assist you with obtaining forms, publications and answers to a wide range of tax questions. If you qualify, IRS can even help you find free tax preparation.

Assistance with your return

You may be one of millions of taxpayers who will be able to prepare and file their 2002 federal tax returns electronically this year — for free. The IRS and the Free File Alliance, LLC, a private-sector consortium of tax software companies, have formed a partnership to help taxpayers electronically prepare and file their federal tax returns for free. Go to the IRS Internet Web site, *IRS.gov*, to link to the Free File homepage.

Free tax preparation is available through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs in most communities. Volunteers help prepare basic tax returns for low-income taxpayers, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and non-English speaking people. Call 1-800-829-1040 to find the VITA or TCE site nearest you. You may also call AARP — the largest TCE participant — at 1-888-AARP NOW (1-888-227-7669) or access www.aarp.org to find the nearest Tax Aide site.

Personal Computer

You can also access a wealth of other free tax information at *IRS.gov*. Check out topics such as “Forms and Publications” to download the forms, instructions or publications you need, “Frequently Asked Questions” on the Individuals page, and “Small Business/Self-Employed” on the Businesses page. If you can’t find your answer, you may submit your tax question via e-mail.

Telephone

You can call the IRS [Tax Help Line for Individuals](http://www.irs.gov/individuals), 1-800-829-1040, to get answers to your federal tax questions.

Help for small businesses, corporations, partnerships and trusts who need information or help preparing business returns is available [at the Business and Specialty Tax Line at](http://www.irs.gov/business) 1-800-829-4933.

Order forms, instructions and publications by calling toll free 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).

TTY/TDD users may call 1-800-829-4059 to ask tax questions or to order forms and publications.

TeleTax

Call 1-800-829-4477 to hear pre-recorded messages covering various tax topics, or to check on the status of your refund.

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TaxFax Service

Using the phone attached to your fax machine, you can receive forms and publications by calling 1-703-368-9694.

Walk-In Service

IRS offices provide a variety of assistance to taxpayers. To find your local office, access the "Individuals" page on *IRS.gov*.

You may walk in to many post offices and libraries to pick up many forms and publications.

For more information about services provided by the IRS, review Publication 910, "Guide to Free Tax Services." Call the number listed above for ordering forms and publications, or download a copy from the IRS Web site at *IRS.gov*.

Whichever method is best for you, the IRS is there to meet your tax information needs.

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